

COURSE SYLLABUS



ETHNICITY AND POLITICS IN SRI LANKA

Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Education Program (ISLE) Program

US semester credit hours: 4

Contact Hours: 60

Course Code: PO382-10 / IS382-10

Course length: Semester

Delivery method: Face to face

Language of Instruction: English

Suggested cross-listings: Politics; International Studies

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to ethnicity and politics in Sri Lanka. The course begins with a conceptual discussion on ethnicity, identity politics, ethno-nationalism, and changing dynamics of ethnicity. The discussion topics include the impact of ethnicity on electoral politics, conflict, democracy, governance, development and reconciliation. The aim of the course is to explore why and how ethnicity has emerged as an important factor in shaping social processes, political dynamics and social conflict in contemporary Sri Lanka. The war between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE ended in May 2009 but the ethnic divide and the tensions continue in different ways. The course discusses, how, in the aftermath of the war, instead of promoting ethnic reconciliation as such, the state has celebrated the military victory. Further, the state has prioritized a program of economic development in the North and East over a process of Social Reconciliation. The course considers the upsurge in ethnicity and nationalism not as a uniquely Sri Lankan phenomenon, but a worldwide process that stands in stark contrast to the expected trajectory of globalization. Students are encouraged to reflect how ethnicity as well as religion has played a role in conflict, politics and development in the past and how they continue to be important in a variety of ways in Sri Lanka.

COURSE DELIVERY

The course will include lectures (twice a week), a seminar by invited guest speaker, field visits and weekly journals on ethnically driven political activities in Sri Lanka.

Students are expected to read the assigned articles in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In most meetings, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic.

Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions (based on experiential learning theory) and to make cognitive connections between this course and others in the IFSA ISLE Program whenever possible (based on the philosophy of transformative learning).

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course are expected to:

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1. Critically approach and review the concepts of ethnicity, identity politics and politicization of ethnicity in the modern world.
2. Explain the political process in Sri Lanka through the lens of ethnic politics.
3. Assess the significance of ethnicity as a basis of group formation, collective bargaining and conflict in a developing country setting.
4. Make connections between ethno-nationalist politics and challenges for democracy, development and reconciliation in a post-war scenario.
5. Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the Sri Lanka program

COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1: Introduction to the Course

Date: 25 Sep, 2018
Instructor: Dhammika Herath, and R. Ramesh
Venue: Isle classroom, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Silva, Niluka

2002 Introduction. In The Hybrid Island: culture crossings and the invention of identity in Sri Lanka. Ed. Niluka Silva. Colombo: Social Scientists Association. Pp. I-vii.

J. Spencer, J. Goodhand, S.H. Hasbullah, B. Klen, B. Korf and K.T. Silva

2014 Checkpoint, Temple, Church and Mosque: A Collaborative Ethnography of War and Peace. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Read "Chapter Two: East as a Complex Religious Field" pp. 27-35.

Session 2: Concept of Ethnicity and Approaches to Understanding Ethnicity

Date: 27 Sep, 2018
Instructor: Dhammika Herath
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Wimmer, Andreas

2008 The making and unmaking of ethnic boundaries: a multilevel process. American Journal of Sociology 113 (4): 970-1022.

Eriksen. T.H.

2010. Ethnicity and Nationalism: anthropological Perspectives. (Read Chapter 1)

Yang, P. Q.

2000 Ethnic Studies: Issues and Approaches. New York: State University of New York Press.
Read Chapter 3: Theories of Ethnicity. Pp. 40-60.

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Session 3: Nationalism

Date: 2 Oct, 2018
Instructor: Dhammika Herath
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Eriksen. T.H.
2010. Ethnicity and Nationalism: anthropological Perspectives. (Read Chapter 6)

Anderson, Benedict.
1983. Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. London and New York. Verso. (Read chapter 1).

Session 4: Patterns of ethno-political mobilization

Date: 4 Oct, 2018
Instructor: R. Ramesh
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Bass, D
2012 Everyday Ethnicity in Sri Lanka: Upcountry Tamils Identity Politics. London: Routledge.
Read Chapter Four.

Sivarajah, Ambalavanar.
1995 "The Rise of Militancy in Tamil Politics." *Security Dilemma of a Small State Pt. II- Internal Crisis and External Intervention*. Mahinda Werake and P.V.J. Jayasekera. Eds. New Delhi: South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd, pp. 120-46

Session 5: Sinhala Nationalism

Date: 9 Oct, 2018
Instructor: Dhammika Herath
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

De Silva, K.M.
2011 Sri Lanka: national identity and the impact of colonialism. In J.C. Holt ed. Sri Lanka reader. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 135-151.

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Nanayakkara, Sankajaya.

2016. Transformations in Sinhala Nationalism. Economic and Political Weekly, II (23): 50-58.

Session 6: Buddhist Sangha in Contemporary Sri Lankan Politics

Date: 11 Oct, 2018

Instructor: K. T. Silva

Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts

Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Seneviratne, H.L.

1999 The Work of Kings: The New Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1999. (Chapter 7. Conclusion: Regeneration to Degeneration)

Silva, K.T.

2016 Gossip, Rumor and Propaganda in Anti-Muslim Campaigns of the Bodu Bala Sena in John Holt ed. Buddhist Extremists and Muslim Minorities: Religious Conflict in Contemporary Sri Lanka. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. 117-140.

Session 7: Field Trip

Date: 12 Oct, 2018

Instructors: Dhammika Herath and R. Ramesh

Venue: Provincial Council in Kandy, Badulla or Monaragala (to be finalized)

Time: 6:00-20:40

Session 8: Discussion on Field Trip

Date: 16 Oct, 2018

Instructor: Dhammika Herath and R. Ramesh

Venue: Isle Lecture Room

Time: 8:00-10:30

Session 9: Tamil Nationalism

Date: 18 Oct, 2018

Instructor: R. Ramesh

Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts

Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Cheran, R.

2009 Pathways of dissent: an introduction to Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka. In R. Cheran ed. Pathways of dissent: Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka. Pp. Xiii-xxvii.

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Coomaraswamy, Radhika & Perera-Rajasingham, Nirmala

2009 Being Tamil in a different way: a feminist critique of the Tamil nation. In R. Cheran ed. Pathways of dissent: Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka. Pp.107-138.

Sivathamby, Karthigesu

2005 Being a Tamil and Sri Lankan. Colombo: Aivakam. Chapters 1 & 2. Pp. 67-81.

Session 10: LTTE and Tamil Politics

Date: 23 Oct, 2018

Instructor: R. Ramesh

Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts

Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Perera, U.

2012 Defeating Terrorism through a Politico-military strategy: Sri Lankan Experience. United States Army War College. Master's Thesis in Strategic Studies.

Somasunderam, Daya

2010 Collective trauma in the Vanni: a qualitative enquiry into the mental health of the internally displaced due to the civil war in Sri Lanka. International Journal of Mental Health 4 (22): 1-31.

Session 11: Diaspora and Tamil Politics

Date: 25 Oct, 2018

Instructor: R. Ramesh

Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts

Time: 8.00-11.15

Kadrigamar, Ahilan

2010 Classes, states and the politics of the Tamil diaspora. Economic and Political Weekly XLV (31): 23-26.

Maunaguru, S.

2009 Brides as Bridges? Movements, Actors, Documents and Anticipation in Constructing Tamilness, in Cheran R. (ed.), Pathways of Dissent: Tamil Nationalism in Sri Lanka, London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 55-88.

Session 12: Identity Politics among Muslims

Date: 30 Oct, 2018

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Instructor: R. Ramesh
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Fazeeha, A.

2012 To go or not to go: struggle for belonging among second generation Muslim IDPs in Kalpitiya in Puttlam district in the context of post war resettlement. In Herath, D. and Silva, K.T. eds. Healing the wounds of war. Colombo: ICES,. pp.167-192.

Hasbullah, S. H.

1996 Refugees are people. Colombo: Northern Muslims Rights Organization.

McGilvray, D.B.

2008 Crucible of conflict: Tamil and Muslim society on the east coast of Sri Lanka. Durham and London: Duke University Press. Read Chapter 8.

Session 13: Buddhist Muslim conflicts in Sri Lanka

Date: 1 Nov, 2018
Instructor: Dhammika Herath
Venue: Isle classroom, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Dhammika Herath and Harshana Rambukwella.

2015 Self, religion, identity and politics: Buddhist and Muslim encounters in contemporary Sri Lanka. Colombo. International Center for Ethnic Studies
<http://ices.lk/publications/self-religion-identity-and-politics-buddhist-and-muslim/>

Jayawardena, Kumari

1970. Economic and Political Factors in the 1915 Riots. *Journal of Asian Studies*. 29(2): 223-233.

Kannangara, A. P.

1984. The Riots of 191: A Study in the Roots of Communal Violence. *The Past and Present Society*; 102: 130-165.

Session 14: Ethnicity and Politics of Development

Date: 6 Nov, 2018

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Instructor: Dhammika Herath
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Herath, Dhammika

2018. Social capital under conditions of ethnic conflict: how does social capital impact on development in micro settings? Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences, 41(1): 47- 62

Loganathan, Ketheshwaran.

1996. Sri Lanka: Lost Opportunities: Past Attempts at Resolving Ethnic Conflict. Colombo. Centre for Policy Research and Analysis, University of Colombo.

Session 15: Seminar on Prospects for Peace and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka

Date: 8 Nov, 2018
Panel: to be identified
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Assigned Readings

Herath, Dhammika

2018 Post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation in Rwanda and Sri Lanka.
Conflict Trends 2018 (1), 35-41

LLRC

2011 Report of the Commission of Enquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation. Colombo: LLRC.
Read Chapter 8: Reconciliation, pages 251-324.

Silva, K.T.

2012 Why the wounds of war in Sri Lanka must be openly recognized and explicitly addressed? Some After Thoughts. . In D. Herath and K.T. Silva eds. Healing the Wounds of War: Rebuilding Sri Lanka after War. Colombo: ICES, 2012 pp. 193-202.

Session 16: Student Presentations on How to Promote Peace in Sri Lanka

Date: 13 Nov, 2018
Panel: Students Enrolled in the Course Participants: Students from University of Peradeniya
Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts
Time: 8.00-11.15

Session 17: Review and Reflections

Date: 17 Nov, 2018
Instructors: Dhammika Herath and R. Ramesh

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Venue: Isle class room, Faculty of Arts

Time: 8.00-11.15

RESOURCES

Students are requested to visit the following website for updates regarding peace and ethnic relations in Sri Lanka.

<http://www.groundviews.org>

<http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/>

<http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/archives/14731>

Colombo Telegraph

FT online.lk

Students are also advised to read newspaper reports regarding ethnic relations and political developments in the country.

EVALUATION METHODS

The course instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for individual assignments for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following course requirements, with percentages of your total grade indicated for each assignment.

Class participation & quizzes	20%
Report on the field visit and Student Presentations in Seminar	30%
Term Paper	50%

Timely Submissions

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.

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Institute for Study Abroad
6201 Corporate Dr., Suite 200 | Indianapolis, IN 46278
800-858-0229 | www.ifsabutler.org